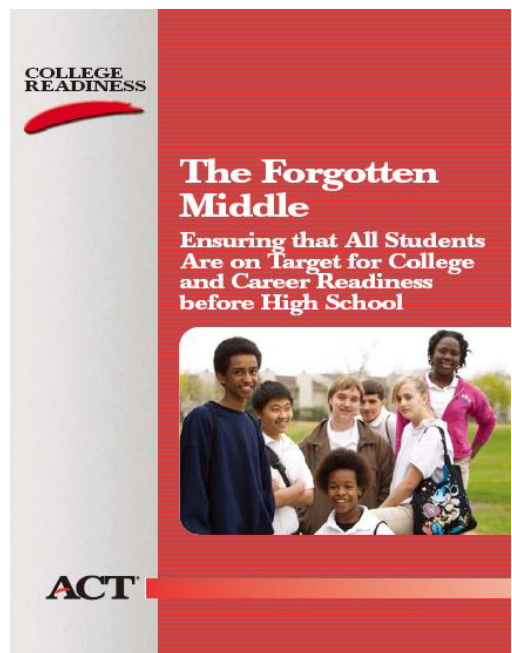

Still The Forgotten Middle

(Updated Version of Report Published in 2008)



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Question

- What's the number of students that remain in school each year, assuming that they are on target to graduate from high school ready for college and career when indeed they are not?

More than 1 Million

***Every* student should be prepared
to a standard of readiness for
postsecondary education and work**

What Impacts College and Career Readiness?

- Right number of core courses
- Right kinds of core courses
- Qualified teachers
- Rigorous courses focused on college readiness outcomes
- Progress monitoring and timely interventions

“...the level of academic achievement that students attain by eighth grade has a larger impact on their college and career readiness by the time they graduate from high school than anything that happens academically in high school”

--The Forgotten Middle(2008), p.2

Purposes of Study

1. To examine the factors that have the greatest impact on improving student college and career readiness
2. To examine the trajectory of growth towards college and career readiness from 8th – 12th grades
3. To examine the influence of academically related student behaviors on college and career readiness

Bottom Line Result

- Students who are not on target for college and career readiness by the eighth grade will have a very difficult time making up the ground they have lost. Without sufficient preparation prior to high school, students cannot maximize the academic benefits of high school while they are there.

Objectives for updated research

- Examine the specific high school factors that influence college and career readiness
 - Identify the most effective predictors of college and career readiness from middle school to high school
 - Examine what steps, if taken by students (to improve their level of academic preparation), would have the most impact on their college and career readiness
 - Note if there have been any improvement since the original report

Data

- High school graduating class of 2013 who took ACT Explore[®] test in 8th grade in 2009:
 - Final data set contained records for 399,642 students at 6,228 high schools
- Outcome Variables
 - Students' ACT scores in English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science

Data

- Student-Level Predictor Variables of Interest:
 - Background characteristics —gender, race/ethnicity, parent educational level, annual family income, and primary language spoken at home
 - Eighth-grade achievement —ACT Explore test scores in English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science
 - Standard coursework—highest level of non-advanced, non-honors courses taken in relevant subject areas
 - High school grade point average—self-reported grade average for courses taken in relevant subject areas

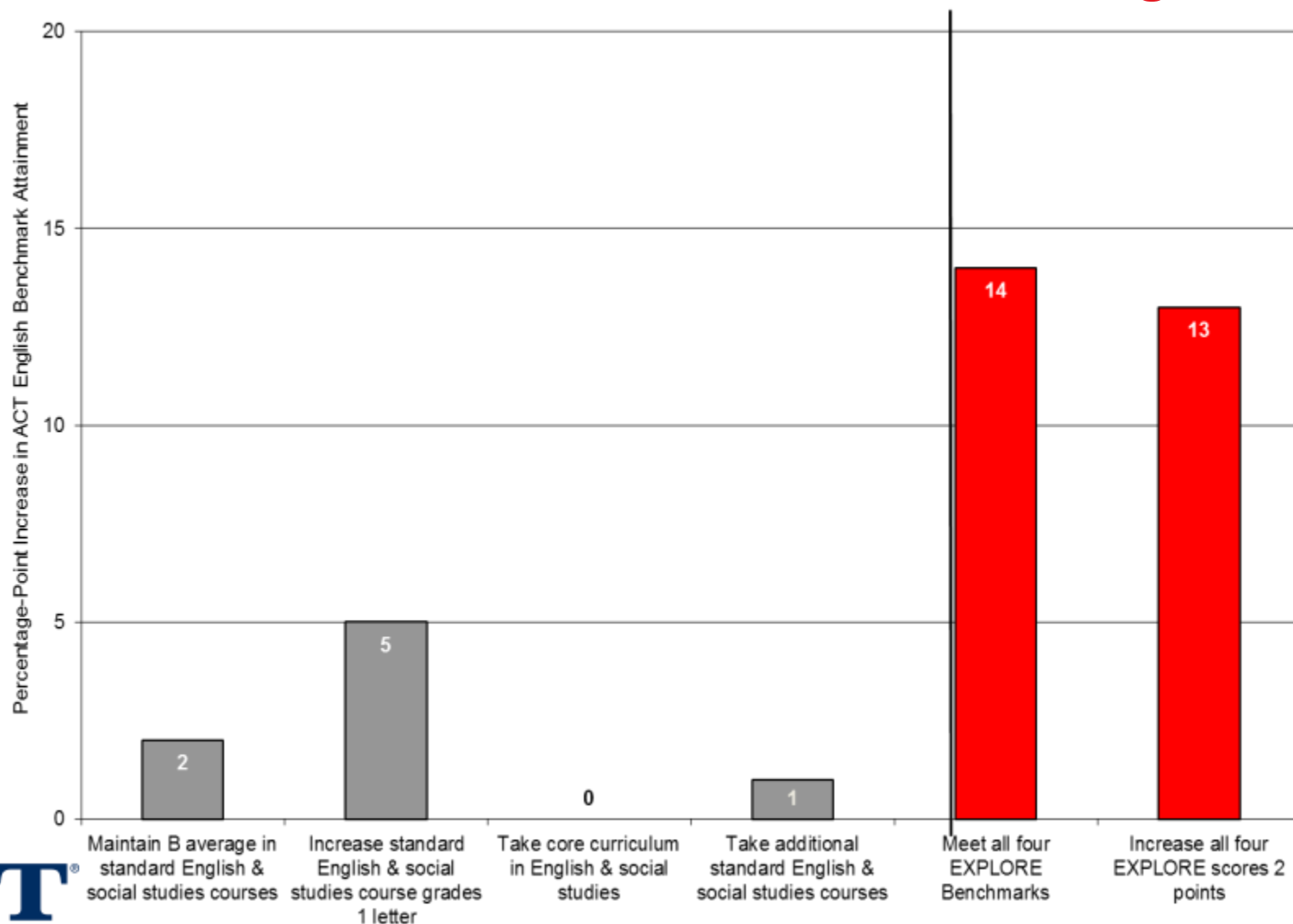
Method

- **Scenarios: What are the consequences of making the following changes for everyone?**
 - Maintaining a B average in relevant standard high school courses;
 - Earning one letter grade higher in relevant standard high school courses;
 - Taking a core curriculum in relevant subject areas in high school;
 - Taking additional standard courses in relevant subject areas in high school;
 - Meeting ACT Explore College Readiness Benchmarks* in all four subject areas; and
 - Increasing ACT Explore scores 2 points in each subject area

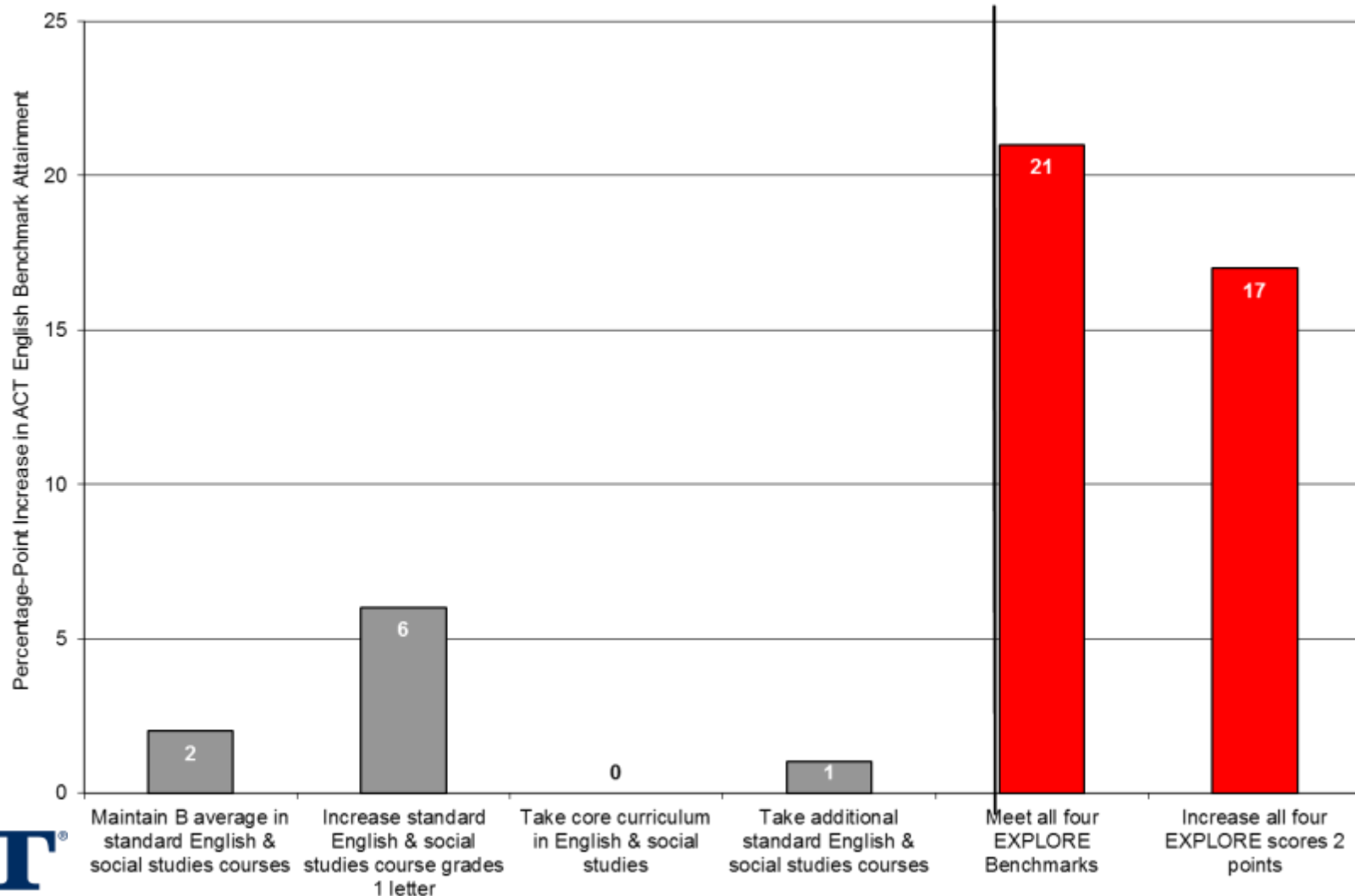
Results

- The additional percentages of students who would meet the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks in each subject area if the students took each of the six steps independently of the others

Increases in ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment Associated with Various Academic Interventions - English

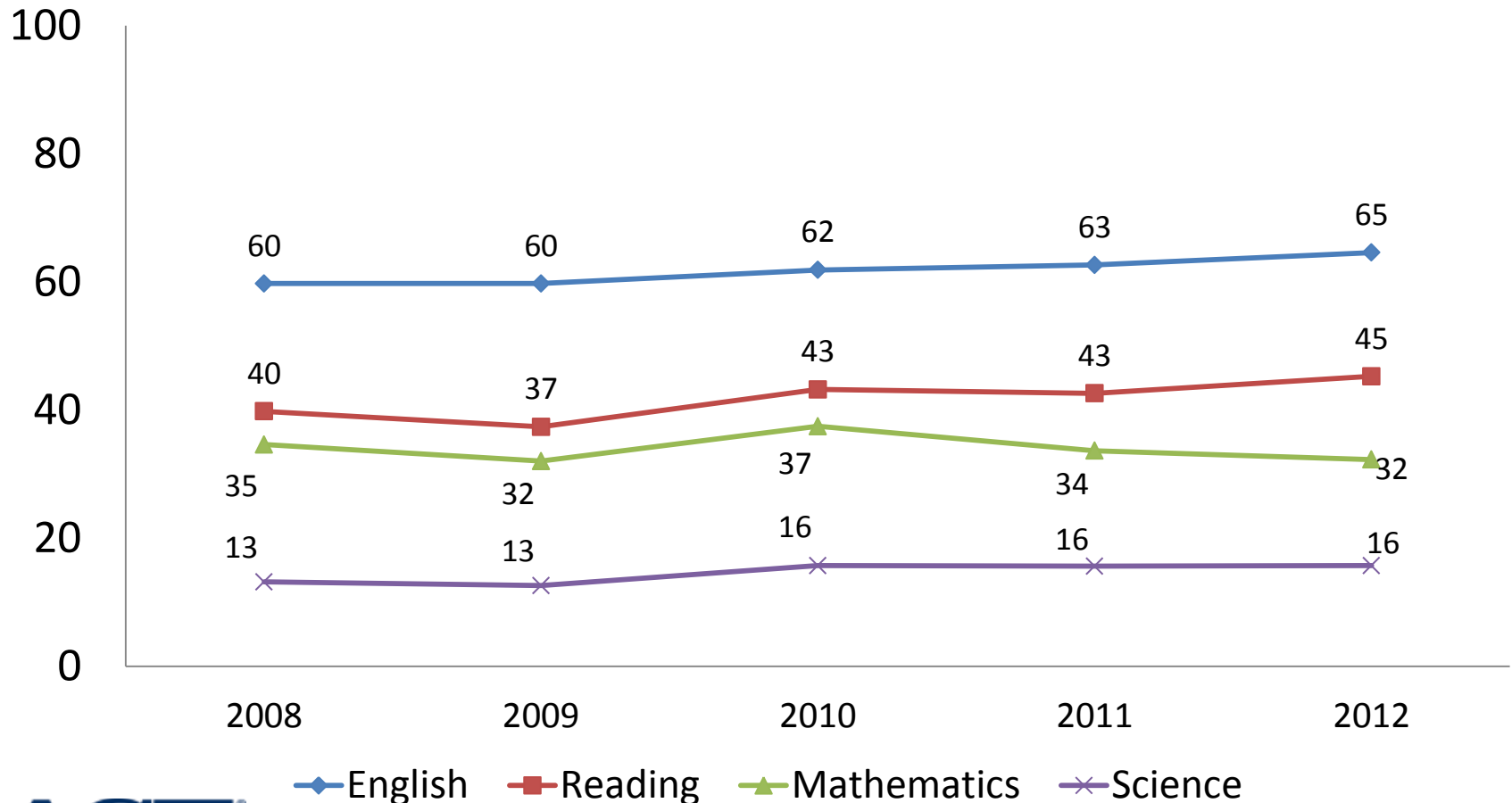


Increases in ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment Associated with Various Academic Interventions Racial/Ethnic Minority Students - English



There has been some progress since 2008

Percent of Explore-Tested Eighth Graders Meeting Explore Benchmarks, 2008-2012



The reality of meeting the College and Career Readiness Benchmarks

- Meeting all 4 benchmarks compared to none will:
 - Increase college enrollments by 21%
 - Increase college retention by 16-17%, depending on the type of institution attended
 - Increase college graduation (bachelors' degree) by 26%

Conclusions

- Preparing students for college and career is a process that begins long before high school.
- It is difficult for students to catch up from 8th to 12th grade. This is a consequence of having little time, a long way to go, and overcoming barriers to learning.
- Middle schools need to prepare more students to profit from high school.
- This situation is essentially unchanged from the original report in 2008



CITIZENSHIP, COLLEGE and CAREER READINESS



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Historically, prediction of student success has centered on standardized achievement and high school GPA, which are important predictors of college readiness. There is growing evidence that success should be modeled with additional data such as psychosocial and behavioral factors. Because cognitive and psychosocial data are independent, using them in combination improves our predictive models and intervention strategies. The challenge is to create a comprehensive assessment system that predicts education success, is tailored to critical transition points (for example, entry into college), and measures characteristics amenable to change.

Habley, Wesley R.; Robbins, Steve; Bloom, Jennifer L. (2012-06-25). *Increasing Persistence: Research-based Strategies for College Student Success* (Kindle Locations 2863-2867). Wiley Publishing. Kindle Edition.



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The second condition necessary for success is that students must exhibit behaviors and develop personal characteristics that contribute to persistence. Among those are motivation, commitment, engagement, and self-regulation. The degree to which these characteristics fuel the desire to achieve an educational objective is directly related to the likelihood of success. Students will succeed if they are committed to their academic goals.

Habley, Wesley R.; Robbins, Steve; Bloom, Jennifer L. (2012-06-25). Increasing Persistence: Research-based Strategies for College Student Success (Kindle Locations 416-419). Wiley Publishing. Kindle Edition.



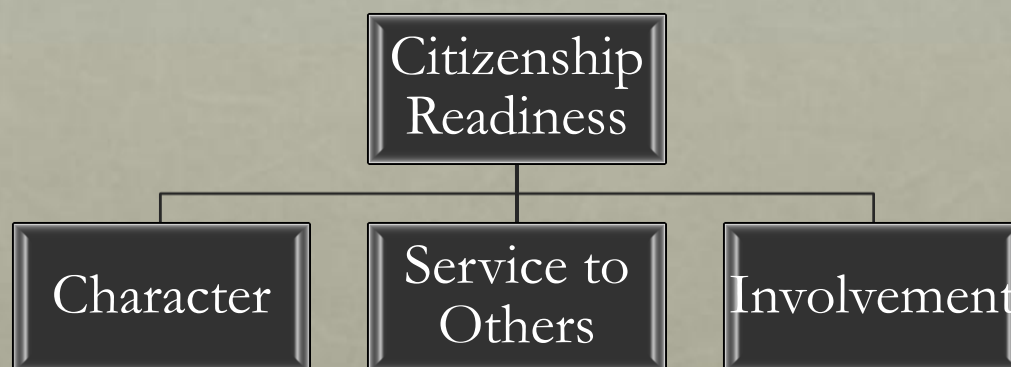
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The third and final core condition is the ability to identify and commit to a plan of study that is congruent with interests and abilities. The attrition landscape is filled with students who entered academic programs where their choices were based on inaccurate information, inappropriate advice, or simply unrealistic expectations. Students will succeed if they connect to a plan of study that fits with their interests and abilities.

Habley, Wesley R.; Robbins, Steve; Bloom, Jennifer L. (2012-06-25). *Increasing Persistence: Research-based Strategies for College Student Success* (Kindle Locations 420-423). Wiley Publishing. Kindle Edition.



CITIZENSHIP, COLLEGE and CAREER READINESS



Empowering middle school students to succeed in high school,
college, and life.



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Career & College Clubs



“We are facing a serious crisis in our middle schools. ... For our community to succeed, we need to be effectively preparing our middle school youth with the academic foundation for college and careers of the 21st century.”

(United Way of Greater Los Angeles 2008)

Career & College Clubs

Our Part of the Solution

Career & College Clubs engages at-risk middle school students in a peer-to-peer learning environment where they lead fun activities on the topics of college/career prep, 21st century skills, financial literacy, and community leadership.

These students feel a greater sense of empowerment, as well as an intrinsic drive to plan for, and achieve, success in high school, college, and life.



Career & College Clubs

Proven Impact

- More than 200 schools
- 50,000+ students reached
- Career & College Clubs' students are more likely to:
 - Plan for a college-prep curriculum in high school.
 - Aspire to a four year postsecondary degree.
 - Aspire to STEM careers.
(ACT 2013)



Career & College Clubs

